



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of:

William G. DENNIS, et. al

Serial No.: 09/885,856

Confirmation No.: 3188

Filed: June 20, 2001

Docket No.: 07710001AA

Group Art Unit: 3763

Examiner: HAYES, Michael J.

For: **SURGICAL INSTRUMENT SEAL ASSEMBLY**

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

REPLY UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111

Sir:

In response to the Non-Final Office Action mailed July 30, 2003 ("Office Action"), Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application in view of the following Amendments and Remarks.

A Petition for a **three (3)**-month extension of time under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) is filed herewith extending the period for response through **January 30, 2004**. It is not believed that any further extensions of time are required other than those in the accompanying Petition. If extensions of time are necessary to prevent abandonment of this application, then such extensions of time are hereby petitioned for under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a). Applicants believe that no further fees for net addition of claims are required at this time. Any fees required for further extensions of time and any fees for the net addition of claims are hereby authorized to be charged to our Deposit Account No. 23-1951.

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Ames B. Boyce
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